



# *State Senator* **NANCY CASSIS** *E-NEWS UPDATE*

## **Bills protect consumers, encourage builder professionalism**

I have heard from a number of constituents, and seen on television, how the poor workmanship of some builders and contractors who compromise buildings standards can negatively effect people's lives.

Because of this, I recently introduced legislation providing protections for individuals from anti-consumer practices of some less reputable builders and contractors who take advantage of clients. The state must provide adequate protections for consumers to ensure their health, safety and welfare. These bills provide necessary protections for consumers, and at the same time, they encourage builders and contractors to maintain the highest levels of professionalism.

The bills give the state the authority to go after unlicensed builders, ensure that every licensed builder has a current code book, add pre-license and continuing education requirements, and provide funding for education and enforcement efforts.

I am grateful to have the support of the Michigan Association of Home Builders. They believe this legislation will encourage professionalism and ensure the positive reputation of their business.

With this package in place, we hope to reduce the number of contractors who might take advantage of a client. Positively, at the same time, we are encouraging and fostering a well-educated, code-literate and professional building work force.

### **Tax measure helps seniors, disabled and vulnerable**

The House of Representatives recently approved a measure I sponsored providing assistance to seniors, veterans, disabled and vulnerable residents.

Senate Bill 348 expands the income threshold for people who qualify to defer the due date of their summer taxes until Feb. 15 of the following year. Currently at \$25,000, the bill increases the allowable gross household income to \$37,500 in 2006 and \$40,000 in 2007.

An eligible person must meet one of the following criteria: be 62 years of age or older; paraplegic or quadriplegic; an eligible serviceperson; veteran; widow or widower; blind; or someone who is totally and permanently disabled.

The acceleration of county property tax collection to the summer gave many people disproportionately high tax bills compared to the past. This has put a considerable amount of financial pressure on many residents, particularly the elderly and disabled and individuals on fixed incomes. By raising the income threshold for deferment, eligible individuals will be better able to balance living expenses against tax obligations.

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### **Contact Information:**

The E-News Update by Senator Nancy Cassis is designed to provide residents and organizations with a periodic update of my activity in Lansing. If you have any questions or do not wish to receive this e-mail, please contact my office.

Phone: (888) 38-NANCY Fax: (517) 373-0938

Mail: P.O. Box 30036, Lansing, MI 48909

E-mail: [sennccassis@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:sennccassis@senate.michigan.gov)

Our website address is: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/cassis/index.htm>